

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

2. **Claims 24-28** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Nawroth (DE 20103545U1).

For claim 24, Nawroth teaches a saddle arrangement comprising: a saddle (fig. 1, not numbered but self explanatory); a stirrup 4; a stirrup bar 5 attached to the saddle at an attachment and having a shank (fig. 1, again not numbered but self explanatory) which extends back from the attachment to define a gap between the shank and the saddle; a buckle 1; a stirrup leather 2,3,6 having a first end (end connected to buckle 1, just right above ref. 2) and a second end (end near ref. 6), the stirrup leather being attached at said first end to said buckle, and said stirrup being threaded onto said stirrup leather between said first end and said second end (fig. 1, self explanatory), and said second end passing through said gap and over said stirrup bar to be secured to said first end by said buckle (in the area of ref. 5), to support said stirrup from said stirrup bar; said buckle comprising: a frame (fig. 2) attached to said first end of said stirrup leather, said frame comprising side arms extending generally parallel to said stirrup leather (fig. 2); and a cross-bar (fig. 2 where ref. 1 is pointing at) connecting the side arms; and said buckle further comprising: a pivot bar (fig. 2, self explanatory); and

a tongue (fig. 2, self explanatory) pivotally attached to said pivot bar for penetrating said second end of said stirrup leather and to bear on said cross-bar to retain said second end; wherein said side arms are curved to define a recess (figs. 3,4 side profiles show curve area); said cross-bar is located, in use, above said stirrup bar (the structure of Nawroth is capable of having the cross-bar be located above the stirrup bar, depending on the user's choice in tightening or loosening the leather by using the buckle and placing the buckle curved body onto the stirrup bar) and said pivot bar is located, in use, below said stirrup bar (the structure of Nawroth is capable of having the pivot bar be located below the stirrup bar, depending on the user's choice in tightening or loosening the leather by using the buckle and placing the buckle curved body onto the stirrup bar); said stirrup bar being received, at least in part, within said recess, and said tongue extending from said pivot bar, below said stirrup bar, to said cross-bar, above said stirrup bar (the structure of Nawroth is capable of having the tongue extending from said pivot bar, below said stirrup bar, to said cross-bar, above said stirrup bar, depending on the user's choice in tightening or loosening the leather by using the buckle and placing the buckle curved body onto the stirrup bar).

For claim 25, Nawroth teaches wherein the frame defines a concavity when viewed transverse to the length of the strap and in the plain of the strap (see figs. 3-4).

For claim 26, Nawroth teaches wherein the frame is generally rectangular in form (see fig. 2).

For claim 27, Nawroth teaches wherein the tongue has an eye through which the pivot bar extends to form the pivotal attachment (see fig. 2, self explanatory).

For claim 28, Nawroth teaches wherein the pivot bar is formed to define a pivot axis which is offset in the direction of the recess, relative to the frame (see figs. 3-4).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. **Claim 29** is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nawroth as applied to claims 24,27,28 above, and further in view of Sauvage (FR 1263033 on form PTO-1449).

Nawroth is silent about wherein the tongue has an eye through which the pivot bar extends to form the pivoted attachment, and wherein the offset of the pivot bar locates the eye with no part of the eye projecting beyond the frame, in the direction away from the recess.

Sauvage teaches a buckle having a tongue 4 and a pivot bar 3 being formed to define a pivot axis which is offset in the direction of a recess (the curve), relative to the centre line of a frame 1,2,2', wherein the pivot axis is offset sufficiently that substantially no part of the eye can project beyond the frame, in the direction away from the recess. See figs. 1-2. Note that the pivot axis of Sauvage is offset sufficiently since Applicant fails to specifically states the offset distance, so any distance, so long as no part of the eye projects beyond the frame, is sufficient. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have the pivot bar of

Nawroth being formed to define a pivot axis which is offset in the direction of a recess, relative to the centre line of a frame, wherein the pivot axis is offset sufficiently that substantially no part of the eye can project beyond the frame, in the direction away from the recess as taught by Sauvage in order to provide a stronger grip on the stirrup leather since the tongue is longer due to the offset, thus, provide a longer length to grip the stirrup leather and to prevent the leather from slipping off easily.

Response to Arguments

5. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-17,22,23 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

6. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Son T. Nguyen whose telephone number is 571-272-6889. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Thu from 10:00am to 5:30pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Peter M. Poon can be reached on 571-272-6891. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Son T. Nguyen/
Primary Examiner
AU3643